THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): The Doha Round of trade talks at the World Trade Organisation is still in underway. In some of the major international meetings held recently such as the G-20 held in London in April 2009, leaders including the US, EU and India have expressed commitment to reaching an ambitious and balanced conclusion to the Doha Development Round.

In the agricultural negotiations, India has been working closely with other developing countries to ensure substantial and effective reductions in agriculture subsidies. This would enable developing countries to promote the interests of and ensure a level playing field for their low income and resource poor farmers.

Accidents of MiG fighter planes

†2758. SHRI OM PRAKASH MATHUR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of MiG planes used by Air Force that met with accident during the last five years alongwith number of pilots who lost their life in these accidents;

(b) whether Government has conducted any study to find out the reasons for their accidents;

(c) the number of remaining MiG planes with the Air Force; and

(d) whether Government has any other option to meet the shortfall of MIG planes?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) A total number of 32 MiG aircraft have met with accident during the last five years (from 1.4.2004 till date). A total number of 8 pilots have lost their lives in these accidents.

(b) to (d) Each accident in the Indian Air Force is investigated through a Court of Inquiry and remedial measures are undertaken accordingly. The fleet strength of the Indian Air Force is reviewed from time to time and necessary action is taken as per the operational requirement.

Revamping DRDO

2759. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what action has been taken by Government on the report of Rama Rao Committee for revamping several ongoing projects of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO); and

(b) the main strategic projects, the panel had suggested to revamp and why?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) The Rama Rao Committee submitted its Report to the Government on 5th March 2008. The Government has recently, constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of Defence Secretary to look into the responses and suggestions made by various stake holders on the recommendations of the Rama Rao Committee.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) The Rama Rao Committee has not suggested any revamp for the "Strategic Projects".

Review of arms deals during tenure of former Chairman, OFB

2760. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has decided to review all files relating to the arms deals conducted during the tenure of former Ordnance Factory Board Chairman;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether a large number of firms have paid illegal gratification to secure defence deals to former Chairman, OFB; and

(d) if so, the concrete steps Government proposes to take to remove corruption in defence deals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) and (b) Ministry of Defence has requested Comptroller and Auditor General to conduct a special audit of procurement contracts concluded during the tenure of former Chairman of Ordnance Factory Board.

(c) During May 2009, CBI had arrested Shri Sudipta Ghosh, former DGOF and Chairman/OFB on charges of demanding and obtaining illegal gratification, criminal conspiracy and criminal misconduct under Section 8, 10, 12 and 13 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, and Section 120B of IPC. The firms alleged to be involved are:

(i) Israeli Military Industries (IMI), Israel;

(ii) Singapore Technology, Singapore:

(iii) HYT, Pune;

(iv) TS Kishan & Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi;

(v) R.K. Machine Tools, Ludhiana;

(vi) BBT, Poland;

(vii) Media Architects Pte Ltd. Singapore.

(d) Ministry of Defence has decided to put on hold for the present all pending procurement and acquisition cases involving the firms figuring in the FIR registered by CBI. An exercise to review the Defence Procurement Procedure 2008 for increasing transparency in procurement is underway.

Cost of maintaining small cantonments

2761. SHRI RAHUL BAJAJ:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state in how many cantonments presently no major Regiment/Institution are based and what is the cost of maintaining such small cantonments?